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ATTACHMENT TO HPM/22

WRITING CS STATION HISTORIES

These guidelines pertain specifically to one kind of CS historical paper: the chronological histories of CIA's overseas stations. The time-span for such papers normally covers the period from the establishment of the station to its closing, or to a logical cut-off date, such as the end of a COS's tour or some event that marked the end of one significant stage in station development.

The usual station history is all-inclusive in scope; it combines administrative and operational history, and deals with every aspect of the station's activities during the period covered. Exceptions are the histories of the larger stations whose organization and activities are so complex that they cannot be treated effectively in a single paper; for these, major operational programs may have to be covered in monographs separate from the basic chronological history. Also bear in mind that the DDS Historical Program will cover the administrative aspects of certain stations; e.g., logistics, finance, commo, security, etc.

In form, station histories are essentially chronological-narrative, but they usually also include descriptive and analytical treatment of significant activities, influences, and problems.

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A. Questions and Answers

As Professor Ehrmann pointed out in his talk to CS Historical Officers on 15 February 1968, one of the first steps in preparing any historical paper is to formulate the questions that the paper is to answer. General questions applicable to CS historical papers are listed in the handbook for writing CS histories, CSHB 5-13-1, Chapter II, pages 5 - 7. Such questions and their answers keep the writer's research properly focused, and help him in the subsequent detailed outlining and writing of the paper.

Some of the most important questions that should always be asked when starting to write a CS station history are listed below. The basic questions are underlined; examples of pertinent more specific questions follow in parentheses.

What was the "setting" in which the station was established? (What were the general conditions and political situation in the country concerned at the time the station was set up?)

Why was the station established? (What U.S. policy decisions, international or local developments, or operational considerations led to the decision to open the station? When and by whom was the decision made?)

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What American intelligence activity in the country preceded the opening of the CIA station? (What, briefly, was the nature and extent of operations conducted by predecessor organizations or by CIA stations in other countries? How did such earlier activity tie in with the establishment of the CIA station?)

When and by whom was the station opened? (Full names and dates of arrival of first COS and other key officers? What was their cover? Where was the station physically located?)

What was the chronology of station personnel? (Full names, titles, arrival and departure of dates of COS's and other key officers during the period of the history? What were their cover positions?)

What was the size and organization of the station? (Total number and functions of personnel at each stage in the station's development? If a large station, what separate functional units existed?)

If the station was later closed, why, when, and by whom? (What policy decisions or circumstances led to closing the station? What disposition was made of station assets? What arrangements were made for future intelligence coverage?).

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What was the station's mission? (What were its priority operational objectives, targets and tasks? What guidance was provided by Headquarters in SOI's, RMD's, OD's and other directives? How realistic were the assigned objectives in relation to capabilities and the local situation? What changes in objectives were made during the period? When? Why?)

What was the operational climate? (How was the conduct of operations affected by the political orientation of the government and populace? How was it affected by activities of local or third-country services? What other local factors impeded or facilitated station operations? What significant changes, if any, took place in the operational climate during the period covered? When? Why?)

What were the station's relationships with Embassy Officers and other U.S. officials? (Who were the Chiefs of Mission and their Deputies during the period of the history? Were they cooperative? What problems arose in dealing with them? What were the station's relationships with other key U.S. officials? Were any problems caused by decisions or actions of State or other U.S. agencies?)

What liaison was developed with local and/or third-country services? (What services? Who were their key officers? Who in the station was in contact with them?)

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What joint operations were developed? What training was given? How valuable were the intelligence information and operational support received? What penetrations were achieved? Did any of these services operate against the station, and with what results? If there was no official liaison, what were the reasons?)

What unilateral intelligence collection (FI and CI) operations were developed and with what results? (What were the major projects? What were their targets and objectives? When and how were they initiated? Who were the agents or other assets? When, by whom, and how were agents recruited? What operational techniques were used? Which station officers handled the major operations? How valuable was the information collected in relation to priority needs? How did the unilateral product compare in value with that obtained through liaison? If there were failures, what were they and what were the reasons?)

What CA programs were conducted? (Why and how were they initiated? What were the targets and objectives? Who/what were the assets? What officers handled the operations? Under what cover? What techniques were used? What were the reasons for successes or failures?)

What were the station's non-official cover assets, if any? (What kind of cover? How successful were the operations?)

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Any mistakes made? Any lessons to be learned?)

Were there any events of major significance during the history of the station which changed the course of station activities? (Coup d'etat? Military or civil uprising? Change of government? International Crisis? How did such events affect station personnel and operations?)

Were there any security hazards, cover problems, or security breaches which had a serious effect on the conduct of station activities? (If so, what were the causes and results? What lessons can be learned?)

Were any station assets or operations compromised through actions of hostile services? (If so, what assets, what operations, by what services or agents? What evidence is there that compromise resulted from activities of hostile agents such as Philby, Blake, Felfe, etc.?)

Were there any significant support problems? (What was their nature and how did they affect station operation?)

Were there any operational or support bases subordinate to the station? (If so, when, why, and by whom were they opened? What were their functions? What was their relationship to the station? If closed, when, why?)

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The above is by no means a complete listing of all that

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might be asked about the history of a station; nor would all these questions be applicable to all stations. But by first formulating basic questions such as these, the writer should then be able to develop further more specific questions as answers are found and research progresses.

B. Research

As a general rule, answers to all the basic questions should be sought first from available documentary records, before conducting interviews or debriefings. CSHB 5-13-1, Chapter IV, Sources, provides a guide to some of the various types of CS official documents and other source materials available for historical exploitation. CS/HPM-11, 26 April 1968, will aid in locating material on the opening and closing of stations. The indices and other research tools available in the Historical Staff, Clandestine Services Group (HS/CSG), are invaluable aids to the writer of CS history in his search for documentary material. In addition, background concerning the countries where stations are located will be found in the NIS's, NIE's, various DDI studies, and other materials available in the CIA library.

A useful device, suggested by Professor Ehrmann, for recording the questions and their answers is to enter each question on a 5x8 or 3x5 card, then add answers as they are

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found, together with references to the sources of the information. These carded references can then later be used in compiling the source bibliography for the paper.

Along with the search for answers to the substantive questions, the writer should construct a chronology with all the dates needed for an understanding of the paper. Professor Ehrmann suggested entering the dates on cards, one date to a card, including in each instance the source of the information. This chronology should be as complete as possible, usually in excess of what will finally be used. Later the chronology can be reduced to the most important dates for inclusion in the final paper as a chronological summary or table.

After getting all the dates and other facts he can out of the documents, the writer should then try to fill the gaps through debriefings of returnees from the field and interviews with other knowledgeable persons, or from his own experience. As CSHB 5-13-1, Chapter IV points out, this order of procedure may sometimes have to be reversed or modified "when the people are more available than the papers." Since so many CS officers are overseas so much of the time, the writer may of necessity question knowledgeable individuals whenever they are available at headquarters, even

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though his study of documents has not yet been completed.

Personal knowledge of the writer and debriefings of former COS's and other officers are valuable sources of historical information, especially on matters such as operational climate, station and personal relationships, special problems of agent handling, security, or cover. However, writers should avoid over-reliance on personal recollections; such source material reinforces and complements but does not take the place of basic documentary research. Good debriefings can only be carried out when the debriefer knows what gaps he needs to fill and has specific questions.

While gathering objective answers to the basic questions, the writer also should be seeking and recording the opinions of knowledgeable persons and forming his own conclusions on the significance of what was done or took place, and on the causes of successes or failures. Such opinions can later be used as the basis for a "Conclusions" chapter or for interpretive comments within the body of the paper.

C. Organizing the Material

As soon as all the needed information has been brought together, and answers found and recorded, the writer can start to organize the material in accordance with the type

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of presentation he has decided is best suited to the subject matter. CSHB 5-13-1, Chapter II (page 7) points out that all CS historical papers normally should be narrative-chronological rather than analytical in treatment, but that "sometimes it is desirable to interrupt the narrative to trace the history of a particular problem." In a station history the chronological narrative almost always has to be "interrupted" by some break-down into topical subdivisions. The activities of most field stations are usually too complex to permit a straight narrative presentation throughout. Thus, the body of a station history usually combines a chronological narrative with description and analysis of particular topics or problems.

There are several "standard items" which should be included in almost any CS history; for example, an introduction or background section, a chronological summary or table, conclusions, and a reference bibliography. (See CSHB 5-13-1, page 22). But the arrangement of the material within the main body of a CS station history will vary widely according to the scope and complexity of the subject matter. The treatment best suited to the history of any particular station will depend on matters such as time-span covered, size of station, events affecting the station's development,

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and the number and nature of the station's operations and relationships.

For a small station with relatively few operations and a more or less uninterrupted history, a simple chronological narrative will usually suffice. For some larger stations with a variety of objectives and programs, the writer may find it best to break the narrative into several major topical sections, each dealing with a particular program or problem, with chronological treatment within each section. In another case, where some major event formed a dividing point in the chronology, e.g. a coup that necessitated redirection of operations, it would be logical to use a basically chronological arrangement, dividing the paper into chapters covering the periods before and after the event. Similarly, if there were several clearly identifiable stages in the Station's development, each period might be the subject of a separate section. The possible minor variations are too numerous to try to mention here. The important thing is to arrange the body of the paper in a well balanced and orderly manner that suits the subject matter and helps to bring proper emphasis to the really significant developments. Obviously, matters of major importance should not be buried in subordinate subsections of the paper.

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Questions sometimes come up about the proper position in a paper of the writer's comments or conclusions on the significance of events or the lessons to be learned from successes or failures. Normally, when meaningful constructive conclusions can be made, they should be summarized in a final chapter following the main body of the paper. If, however, a station history is divided into a number of sections--each dealing with a particular program, problem or period--, pertinent conclusions may be included in the main body of the paper at the end of the appropriate sections. If this is done, a brief general summary of all the significant conclusions may also be added as a separate final chapter of the paper. Wherever they may be placed in the paper, all conclusions and matters of opinion must be clearly identifiable as such, and not indiscriminately mixed with factual matter. The Handbook (page 7) has this to say:

"Using evidence responsibly in context, honest conclusions can be drawn regarding the extent of successes and failures and the reasons therefor. But the factual narrative should not be interlarded with editorializing, and personal opinion should not be substituted for an objective narrative."

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